

EDISON, THE PEACEFUL

HURRY AND HUSTLE THE BASIS OF
MODERN LIFE, SAYS THE INVENTOR

A long, high walled room, paneled and wainscoted with light wood; green hangings at occasional alcoves, many windows, the light from which is tempered to a mellow atmosphere, comfortable chairs free from the intrusion of other visitors, portraits of celebrated men, the most conspicuous one of President Roosevelt with his menacing smile; a statue holding aloft an incandescent bulb in lieu of torch, long, low bookshelves filled with many scientific volumes, a huge clock which stares from the opposite wall. That is the reception room of Thomas Edison.

Perhaps it is because many of the volumes on the bookshelves are upside down, or because the electric clock marks five minutes past 4 when it is really 11, that the visitors are conscious of a sense of serenity which certainly the name of Edison does not evoke, a name linked with all sorts and kinds of noise making machines, nerve racking experiments.

Will the Wizard surprise in like manner? Almost as soon as the question is formed the door has opened to admit someone, who advances leisurely, as a victim might advance to the electric chair of his own making. He has not been announced, and the picture memory is notoriously weak, but his clothes betray him. No one but a genius would dare to flaunt such indifference, and if a face could be called comfortable to match the clothes, then that word might describe Edison's. Its expression is one of kindness and power, the eyes are the gray blue of the explorer in the desert, whether of sand or science, there are many wrinkles about them, wrinkles which denote humor, humanity and Herculean effort, the features large and strong, the hair sparse and white, gradually receding before the dome of thought. The color of the face shows the effect of a shut in life. In his chair he sits relaxed, and when he is thinking, seems to look within rather than to the outer world. A slight deafness helps to this appearance of abstraction.

"I am working at present on the motor battery for automobiles. My idea is to make it possible for a tonneau car for four persons to go without recharging for a hundred miles. We can do that now with heavy trucks, but the motor is too heavy for the auto for traveling. The practical limit at present is fifty miles for the tonneau."

"And you will limit the distance for the perfected auto of the future to a hundred miles?"

"There is no limit to anything in this world. I would not venture to say that the automobile of the future might not go any distance. This is merely the next step."

"Do I ride much in them myself?" A great deal, partly for pleasure and partly for experimental purposes. I have eight, one with tonneau for four with a limit of fifty miles, the smaller ones with a seventy-five mile limit, depending on the make. I have gasoline and steam motors also, which I use to note experiments, for those are the ones I must beat, and will. The electric auto is the auto of the future; it is bound to be, for it is the surest and the simplest. There is nothing to an electric auto but a couple of chains and a motor; it is really the ideal machine if we can only get the motor down light enough."

The corners of the Wizard's eyes wrinkle, and with a chuckle he changes the conversation from the scientific into the personal.

"Last Sunday I was near Plainfield with one of my new motors, having a fine time speeding along, when suddenly, about a quarter of a mile ahead of me, I saw a man in a machine rise up, wave his hands frantically and yell, 'Look out for the police!' So, of course, I slowed down. The joke of it is that the Plainfield police, after erecting a sign to warn motor cars to keep within the speed limit, had fixed a stop watch to the sign, and then, by a series of telephone ploys every quarter of a mile, had devised a system by which, as soon as a car passed the sign, the watch marked the time, which was telephoned ahead to the next quarter, and so on, so that it was very easy to find out the exact speed."

"Then they stationed themselves along the route in plain clothes, waiting to grab the unwary but the unwary caught on and simply yelled to each other, and the word went back along a line of a hundred autos, which slowed down to a funeral pace."

I wish you could have seen the faces of those plain clothes men.

"To go back. Very often I am asked what I am working on and how long it takes me to complete an invention. Neither of these questions is an easy one to answer. To-day I am still at work on things which I commenced fifteen years ago and are still uncompleted. Some of these are on the market, and I am making improvements, some of them the public know nothing about."

The Wizard shook his head with a determined motion and an amiable smile. "No. I cannot tell you, for this reason. I am not a scientist merely, my inventions are limited to the commercially useful and industrial. An invention of this class, until it is absolutely practical and capable of being sold, is not a success. If I were purely a scientist, I could announce inventions beforehand, as soon as they had reached a certain stage."

"I have been working away four years on this motor battery. I worked steadily for eight years on the incandescent light, and I have worked thirty-five years on the phonograph."

A great deal of my time at present is directed toward the perfection of the phonograph. I want to improve the quality of tone. A very little alteration makes a great difference in quality, and experiments are correspondingly difficult. You can't tell why a Stradivarius violin is so good."

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"I firmly believe that it is that question of refraction which makes it possible for you to hear Wagner and Beethoven over and over again and not get tired, while the simple melody, however beautiful, wears after a while and ends in disgust and dislike, for the music of men like those named is so complicated that it has not the same effect on the nerve centers."

"Mr. Edison," the interviewer asked abruptly, "do you think that all these inventions, this machinery of one kind and another, makes the world any happier—any better?"

The answer came tumbling on the heels of the question: "I do not. I wish I could answer all questions so easily and so sincerely. I don't know where we are here for and I don't know where we are going. I wish you could tell me. I wish I could tell you. What does this mad rush mean? Why is this age going such a headlong pace? Why have we replaced the beautiful and the simple with the commercial and scientific? One man leaves all and goes about the world hunting butterflies. I don't understand him. Would he understand me? I don't think so."

"There is one thing sure. Our senses are too acute for the life of the city; they are adapted to the rural life. I have a neighbor who goes into the city every day and is dreadfully worried over the fact that he is growing deaf. I cheer him up. I tell him he is in great luck; that I never go there that I am not thankful for my deafness. If the eyesight would be blunted a little so that we would not have so many useless impressions recorded in the brain it would be well. Our sense of taste needs blunting, too, and then we would not over-eat and overdrink."

Investment in the part of three brothers who are in the restaurant business.

Already the farm managers have been the direction of a graduate of the French School of Agriculture, and most of the farmhands are French and accustomed to the cultivation of the products which this farm is intended to produce.

The experiment is to raise the same vegetables that are grown in France and are not undertaken here except on a very small scale. French asparagus of mammoth size and delicious flavor is expected, and the proprietors are most hopeful of this result, because the region has long been famous for the quality of asparagus it produces.

French potatoes, which must now be imported from France, will be another of the products. French potatoes are important in the stock of every restaurant, since without them it is impossible to make certain dishes.

Pommes de terre soufflées are, for instance, impossible without French potatoes. The American or Irish potato is too dry and compact to swell when it is dropped into the boiling lard.

Then there are to be endives, which must now be imported from France and are expensive on this account beyond the means of most persons who cannot pay an unlimited price for salad; French beans which

"You take the case of locomotives; they appear alike, they have the same measurements, to all intents and purposes they are alike and yet one of the two will be far better than the other, and no one can tell why."

"In working on the perfection of the

"New York! It is the epitome of the horror of the age. I hate it. I loathe its artificial way of living, its mannerisms, its ways of thought. It has but the one redeeming feature, that it is getting so impossible that people must leave it or become crazy."

"A man in New York gets down to his of-



"AN INVENTOR SHOULD BE A BULLDOG WITH A POETIC ATTACHMENT."

photograph I discovered incidentally a strange thing—the reason practically why the popular air—soon dies out and cannot be revived in public favor. I got out a nice waltz, one that I like exceedingly myself, and said, 'Now we will use that waltz for recording.' You see, in order to get the finest shades of alteration it is

free at 9, works until 12 or 1, goes out, takes a couple of cocktails, sets a heavy lunch-eon hurriedly, goes back to his desk and works until 6 or 8, hurries up town, stopping off for one or two more drinks, goes out somewhere, eats an enormous dinner, goes to the theater and then supper afterward, and finally tumbles into bed. It is that type of man who often says to me, I don't see how you stand the strain of working the way you do day after day and night after night in the laboratory. Work? Why, my work is play compared with his, and yet I am here on an average from 8 in the morning until 10 at night, but I am shut out from the world, the work is interesting, there is none of the terrible strain that comes to the man in the city."

"It is imagination that makes the poet; it is imagination that makes the inventor, for the dream precedes the work, the result, the effort. Just as the writer thinks of his plot and makes his characters work it out, so the inventor labors toward something which is already perfect in his mind. Any man can become an inventor if he has imagination and pertinacity; an inventor is simply a bulldog with a poetic attachment, that is all."

"The longest time I ever worked continuously was five days and five nights without sleep. That was during some of the lighting experiments. Once I worked four days and four nights—that was just before the opening of the Pearl street station. We did not know what was going to happen; we expected something would explode when we turned on the current. Everybody said it was going to be a failure. When we turned on the current, however, it started all right, without a hitch, and ran for eight hours."

"What effect does the loss of sleep have? None at all. I have always been able to drop down and sleep any time, anywhere and feel absolutely no ill effects from my long work. I believe that people as a general thing sleep too much; three or four hours are enough if it is good solid sleep, not dreaming—that isn't sleep."

"Insomnia? I have to laugh when people talk about that. A man came to me once—couldn't sleep, was troubled with insomnia and was terribly worried. I said 'I'll cure you.' I put him to work on a Mercury pump, kept him at it, told him he must finish it at a certain time and he couldn't sleep there was no excuse for his stopping. At the end of the third day we found the pump all broken to pieces and the victim of insomnia sound asleep on the ruins. Sleep is only an inheritance; if the sun should keep on shining people would get over the habit of sleep in time."

"Do I think wireless telegraphy will become perfected? I surely do. I think the greatest setback it has ever had was the recent marriage of Marconi, but he will get over that in time and go on with his experiment. It is doubtful if he will be able to overcome the interference of other messages absolutely. If he does then the cable is doomed, but that is far in the future."

"Do I think it will ever be used to communicate with other planets? You are getting out of my reach. I limit my scientific researches below the apex of the Himalaya mountains and let Mr. Tesla have all the space above that—that is his field, the field of astronomical electricity. I should say, however, that question would be settled by the telescopic lens rather than by the wireless telegraphy."

"If I believe in coming great commercial invention," was the answer to the next question, "will be the production of electricity directly from coal without the intervention of machinery; by the present process we only get 10 per cent, and the other 90 is thrown away."

Mr. Edison then told a little of the process of invention. "It is a great lesson in the eternal law of development. My own experience, as well as that of every inventor I have talked to, is that if you get something for nothing you may be sure you are on the wrong path. If you get the result without strenuous effort, there is only one rule, apparently, to follow, and that is to cast it aside and begin all over again, for you are on the wrong path."

At the end, Mr. Edison spoke half feelingly, half humorously, of the fact that he is growing old.

"Can you not invent something," was asked, "to keep us ever young and fair?" The Wizard nodded wisely. "It may come, it may come; not in my time, not yet; but who knows?"

"How by the sacrifice of animal life. By serums that will replace worn-out tissues. With it should come, however, the mental change, for when a man has seen all he has worked and played and suffered and has reached the life limit, he is usually ready to go. I know my father at 84 was reconciled."

"Well, I shall be ready, too, but," the eyes grew introspective, "it would be interesting to know if life ever will be indefinitely prolonged."

are now known only through the specimens put up in tin or glass, and the kind of artichokes grown in French gardens.

All these good things are to be the experiments of the new farm. What the results will be it is not yet possible to say. But the undertaking is interesting because it is the first of its kind.

The string beans that the French use are not grown at all in this country. They are so attractive to the eye that they are often used canned, even when the fresh beans are in the market. They are long and thin, darker in color than the green bean grown here, and while no better in flavor are much more alluring to the eye.

Most American cooks do not do justice

WOMAN AND HER EX-HUSBAND

QUEER, AMICABLE RELATIONS
AFTER SOME DIVORCES.

Wives Who Substitute Friendship for Matrimony—Former Husbands Who Like That Arrangement—A Cruel Husband's Repentance—The Children.

Many a woman retains even after she gets a divorce a soft spot in her heart for the man who was once dear to her. This is shown by the amity existing between divorced couples in New York.

The cold "divorce" might be expected to suggest harsh words, cold stares, frozen faces, but not so in New York. For instance, take the case of one beautiful woman, suave, gracious, charming, who divorced her husband.

She retained the custody of the child, a boy. On her mantel stands a large photograph of her former husband. She exhibits it with pride.

"Isn't he handsome?" she asks.

"Then you have no animosity?" a visitor once asked.

"None whatever," she replied instantly. "We are very good friends. He often comes and takes me out to dinner. You forget that he is Charlie's father."

This with an infection of surprise. According to the decision of the court, Charlie's father has no right to his society, but the mother permits the boy to spend part of his time with him.

"He mustn't be allowed to forget his father, you know," she says.

The wonder to her many friends is that a man could treat such a woman in such a way as to drive her to seek a divorce.

Matters have grown more and more complicated of late in this particular family. The woman is engaged now to a man whose wife has divorced him.

These two have a little daughter, of whom both are exceedingly fond. In his apartments side by side are handsome portraits of his intended wife, his former wife and his little daughter. And his former wife and his child frequently spend the day with him.

Not long ago some friends gave a little party and left the engaged couple out. They wondered why. They were told that the former wife was expected at this entertainment.

"I can't understand," said the intended wife plaintively, "why they should have left us out. I have met her former wife. He introduced us. I admire her very much indeed."

Another New York man obtained a divorce from his wife. The wife refused absolutely to give up her children.

After a time her former husband went to the Far East. Before he departed he called upon his divorced wife and bade her goodbye. Not only that, but he took her to an influential woman, the friend of both, and asked her with tears in his eyes to look after his ex-wife, to befriend her in his absence.

Now he writes long loving letters to her from the far off country which she carries next her heart.

"He is the father of my children, you know," she says in explanation.

Another exceedingly pretty woman gave popular Friday evening entertainments. At first her husband was very much in evidence. Then he disappeared.

People wondered a little inwardly, but outwardly they smiled and were calm. Also, they said nothing, for unless one sees the husband or the wife before one's eyes in New York one is discreetly silent.

The Friday evening entertainments continued. The wife, who is very popular, appeared at first with eyes that showed some traces of tears. Then they brightened, and she was gay as formerly, if not gayer.

Her friends surrounded her. They determined to console her, and console her they did.

By and by one of these friends asked her to an entertainment he was giving.

"What night was it you said?" she returned, blushing prettily.

"Wednesday night," said he.

"Wednesday night," she repeated. "Well, you must let me bring my husband if I come that night. It is the night he comes to see me," she finished.

Still another woman separated from her husband because of his extreme cruelty. She applied for support. The Magistrate decided that unless she returned to him she was not entitled to support from him.

She went to work, and succeeded. Her friends, who gathered around her and made her life pleasant. At the end of a year she had dismissed the nightmare of her life with him and was happy again.

She was upon the eve of going out on a big rubberneck wagon with some thirty of these friends and was thinking incidentally, as she looked in the glass to see if her face was on straight, how she would like to meet her husband and thank him for treating her so badly that she was forced to leave him, since it had been after all for her good, when a knock came at her door.

The janitor stood outside the door smiling at her. That is one reason her life is so pleasant, the janitor is kind to her.

"There's a man downstairs," he said, "that I never see before. He's got on a long overcoat and he wears glasses. He won't come up."

"All right, Joe," she smiled back. "I'll be down in a minute." She ran outside to find her husband. At first she didn't quite recognize him, then she shook hands with him quite cordially and they walked along the street together.

In fact, he walked about ten blocks with her. He told her how he had seen her on the street two weeks before and she had looked so tired and sad that he thought he really must come back and console her.

"I wasn't at all sad," she told him haughty. "No, the best bit I am ever said now that I am no longer married. I had been a Brooklyn and was tired. It always makes me tired to go to Brooklyn. That was all. I am happy now," she reassured, "very, very happy."

He refused to believe that, since she no longer lived with him, but that was his nature. He persisted in declaring that she grieved for him, but she knew the real truth of the matter.

She had succeeded with her work and she had failed. She had become, therefore, a good investment. He ended by begging her to forgive him and take him back.

She was a year older than she had been the year before and had consequently learned a few things, so she refused, but she did it very politely.

"If my husband for a year, you know," she explained to some friends on the rubberneck wagon who saw her shake hands with him before he walked out of her life again.

to the bean, even as it is here, and probably he would not appreciate the beauty of the imported article. It is discouraging to see the string beans which are so delicious in flavor chopped up as if they were all intended for succotash.

The careful stringing of a bean, which is really the most important thing about its preparation, is often ignored and cooks hope to eliminate the string by cutting the bean into small pieces. But the string sticks and the flavor is destroyed.

The beans after they have been carefully stringed should be cooked full length and not chopped into two or three pieces. Additional flavor of a kind that all do not like is imparted to the bean by boiling a good sized piece of bacon with them. This additional flavor is especially good with the yellow beans and is so much enjoyed in the South.

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